

### 3/ The Kiss: Symbol of Peace & Friendship

#### A. False Peace

#### b. From the World & Flesh

#### Ch. 2, 8-15

Meditations on the Song of Songs  
by Teresa of Avila

Treats of **Nine kinds of false peace** presented to the soul by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Explains the holiness of the religious state. This holiness leads to the true peace desired by the bride in the Song of Songs.

#### From Riches

**8.** As for **riches!** If people have easily what they need, a lot of money and guard against committing serious sins, they think everything is done.

They enjoy what they have and give **alms** every now and again. They do not think that their riches are not their own but given by the Lord to share among the poor.

They will have to give account for the time they had a surplus in their coffers while putting off the suffering poor.

This topic is not pertinent to us, but that the Lord give them light that they not continue in this daze and have happen to them what happened to the covetous rich man.

Praise the Lord that He has made you poor and that you accept this poverty as a special favor from Him.

**9.** Oh, my daughters, what a relief not to have these burdens; as for the final day, the rich are the slaves and you the masters... Praise the Lord ... that you don't have any possessions in particular. We eat what the Lord sends. He takes care that we lack nothing. We don't have to give account for

what is left over as it is so small, too small to share...

**10.** We need only be content with little ... We must not want as much as any rich person who will have to give a **strict account**. If he understood, he would not eat so happily nor would he spend what he has on vanities ...

As for you, daughters, look always for the poorest things in clothing and food ... Strive always to serve His Majesty that you do not eat the food of the poor without serving Him for it. One can only poorly repay in service in exchange for the **calm** and **repose** the Lord gives when there is not obligation to account for riches.

#### From Honors

**11.** Now about the peace the world gives through **honors**. I don't think I have anything to say to you; the poor are never honored much.

**Praise** can do you great **harm** ... The most common way will be by telling you that you are **saints** in exaggerated terms ... If spoken in the person's presence, what fruit can they bear? Only **harm**, if you are not very cautious.

**12.** Never seek **peace** for yourselves through **words of praise**. Little by little they could do you **harm**, making you believe **truth** was spoken ...and that you have done your part. Never let a word of praise pass without **waging an interior war**... Remember how the world treated Christ but how they exalted Him on Palm Sunday. Look at the esteem it had for St. John the Baptizer; they wanted to make him Messiah, but ended up beheading him.

**13.** Never does the **world exalt** without putting down, if the exalted are the sons of

God. It used to afflict me to see so much blindness ... now I laugh to myself as though someone crazy were speaking. Remember your sins! If in some matters people speak the truth in praising you, note that the virtue is not yours and that you are obliged to serve more. Awaken fear in your soul so that you do not rest in the **kiss of this false peace** given by the world; think that it is a kiss from Judas...

Believe that you have to stand here with a **sword** in the hand of your thoughts. Although you think the praises do you no harm, do not trust it. Remember how many were at the top and are now at the bottom. There is no **security** while we are alive. For love of God, Sisters, always wage an **interior war** against these praises for thus you will come away from them with the gain of **humility** ...

### **From Comforts**

**15.** Oh, daughters, if you knew what great **evil** lies enclosed here. The body grows fat and the soul weakens. If we were to see the soul, we would think it about ready to expire.

In many books you will find ... the great **evil** found in seeking one's peace in **comforts**, for if we understand that to do so is wrong, we will have hope for a **remedy**. I fear the thought doesn't cross peoples' minds. I'm not surprised since the evil is so common. Even though through comforts a person's flesh is at rest, in a thousand ways there will be a **war** for such a person to be **saved**.

It would be valuable for souls to understand themselves and take up the penance

**gradually** that would otherwise come to them **all at once**.

Praise God, daughters, that you are in a place where, though it may want to, your flesh cannot find peace in comforts.

Such a craving for comfort could harm you ...under the excuse of sickness for example. Be careful about this ...

What I am saying is that we must not find our rest in being **lax**. This flesh is very deceptive ...

May the Lord, out of His goodness, give us **light** for everything. **Discretion** is very important, as is **trust in our superiors** rather than in ourselves. Amen